

Eyewitness Descriptions

The Battle of Salado and Dawson Massacre

Miles S. Bennet for Texas Veterans Association, 1900

Miles S. Bennet, Cuero, DeWitt County, Texas, 1900.

*Events on the Western Frontier 1839-1842, the Battle of Salado and Dawson Massacre
written for the approaching Texas Veterans Association Meeting, San Antonio, 1900
(From The Center for American History, University of Texas Austin).*

The approaching annual Meeting of the Texas Veteran Association will be held by Invitation of the City of San Antonio on the Anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto. This Society desire to perpetuate the Unity of Texas, instill Patriotism in the hearts of our Young People, and develop a lively interest in the history of our State. It was organized in the City of Houston in 1873: a Constitution and By Laws were adopted, an executive Committee and a Committee on Credentials were appointed. All Colonists, Seamen and Soldiers who did service and were resident Citizens up to the period of Annexation of Texas to the United States are eligible for membership. The Anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto was chosen as the time for the Annual Reunion of the Association. The Rail Roads furnished free transportation to the members, including their wives and Widows to and from the place of meeting.

We have thus been able every year to keep this Anniversary, have been pleasantly entertained in and given the freedom of many of our Cities: in some of them several times, notably the City of Houston which we make our permanant Headquarters by Special Request extended to us six years ago. Last year we enjoyed our Meeting with the People of Temple the second time: but we were reduced in numbers to only about one hundred, one half of whom were Ladies although we had once numbered Eight hundred and sixty. At our meeting in San Antonio twenty years ago, we had an attendance of about one hundred and eighty-five ten or more of whom resided in the city, but are now deceased. In all these meetings it has been pleasant to notice the great interest manifested by the young, and especially the School Children, who Sometimes marched with us in the public Parade, or eagerly strewed Roses in our path; but more particularly while receiving us at their Homes for a few days plied us with interesting questions about the early conflicts, and listened with attention to our narrations of incidents of Frontier Life.

And now in order to encourage in the minds of the young a laudable research into the history of this part of our Country, as well as to revive in the memories of the old Texians recollections of the times when in their Strong manhood they helped to establish our peoples in their homes, and to protect them from their enemies, San Antonio and its surroundings, holding a thrilling and prolonged esperience of those eventful times: let us Imagine the appearance of the country west of the Guadalupe as it was in 1838, and picture of San Antonio a devastated Mexican town with a few Suburban Ranches on the river, isolated from other people: there being no Settlements eastward for many miles: and westward the region lay in its lonely but beautiful Solitude, except when occasionally traversed by small companies of Traders who communicated with towns in Mexico.

The grass was in such abundance that when the annual fires swept over the land the small bushes were burned off; keeping long reaches of prairie; and when the verdure was renewed the whole country abounded in game. Horses were in great numbers.- I have seen them in droves and during one days scouting as many as twenty bears. In a continued Norther herds of Deer would collect in some sheltered Valley in such numbers that three hundred could be seen in one view. In this lovely hunting ground the Indians roamed at will, and their encampments were often seen by adventurous Scout. The Indians were ostensibly friendly, and occasionally come into San Antonio to make treaties; they complained about the hunters blazing their trees: and late in June 1838 finding on the Rio Frio a surveying party, the young Indians in driving past took off with them some of the horses of the camp: in trying to recover them Mr Campbell was killed, Capt Cage got an arrow in his face, Josh Threadgill and others escaped.

Sept 21st John C Hays with forty men started to survey the lands of the Rio Leona. Oct 19th a surveying Camp at the Leon Springs seven miles from town, at the crossing of the Presidio Road, was attacked by Indians, and Moses Lapham a San Jacinto Soldier, and Mr Jones were killed; Mr Earnest escaped on foot and brought the news to town. Captain Cage with twelve men went out to reconoiter, and when about four miles from town, at some Live Oak trees near the Presidio Road, were surrounded by a large body of Savages: Cage and seven others were killed. On

the 21st we buried the ten Americans in one grave, just outside the wall, at the N. E. Corner of the Campo Santo, in the suburbs of S. Antonio (where the Public Road afterward ran over the spot) a cold drizzling rain prevailing: Judge Robinson delivered a Eulogy at the graves, Court was in Session: great gloom prevailed. Several Mexicans were killed about this time; when one was found slain at a distance from home, friends would staiten out the body, bind a forked stake on his back down his legs, place him in the Saddle on a gentle Mule, fasten him firmly in the stirrups, and thus easily convey the corpse to the Ranche.

Dec. 30th Major Bennet brought out to San Antonio from Headquarters at Houston two companies of Texas Regulars, Commanded by Captains Jordan and Howard. In May 1839 The Chieftain Cordova and his Banditti depredated in the Vicinity. May 14th Surveyor John James and party worked on the tributaries of the Cibolo; they were attacked and Ephraim Bollinger with three or four others were killed. 28th Cordova and his band killed some Mexicans near town. 29th, Mr Delmour, Clerk of the Court, who was living down at the Mission, was found in the River near there, Shot and Scalped, he was robbed by his Mexican servant, who rode his fine Horse westward. In June '39, ten or twelve Mexicans were killed by Indians, and so much apprehension was felt at the Ranches that many of the families were removed to town: public sentiment favored a campaign against the Savages, and Col. Henry W. Karnes, with Col. Juan N. Sequin, led an expedition against them; this was composed of one hundred and eight men, one half of whom were Americans, and quieted the enemy for a while.

Omitting a continued narration of troubles on this frontier which with repeated rumors of another Mexican invasion prevented immigration, the raids of the Enemy in 1842 require some notice. Early in March of that year the Mexican Genl. Vazquez with a force of about five hundred cavalry invaded San Antonio: as they were reported to be the advance of a large Army, and there being only about one hundred Texians to resist them the Families hurriedly removed with such household goods as they could haul off with their few ox carts: one citizen having a store of valuable goods, blew up the house rather than contribute them to the enemy, and they joined the families on the Guadalupe in a general panic and retreat eastward. As the enemy entered the Southwest corner of the town the Texians entered by the opposite side bringing away their one small cannon and ammunition. By the ninth of March some two hundred Texians had rallied on the Guadalupe, and moving on the relief of San Antonio encamped near the Mission Conception: General Ed. Burleson and Captain Danl. B. Friar in command. The Robbers had sacked the town and fallen back to the Rio Grande: the Texians desired to pursue them but after scouting around two or three weeks they reorganized forming two companies of forty men each, one commanded by Col. Louis P. Cook, the other by Captain J. C. Hays.

These volunteers guarded the approaches to San Antonio scouting on the Atascosa, along the Laredo Road, on the Rio Frio and Nueces and along the Presidio Road: they had meager outfit and fare, subsisting mostly on wild game, and as their clothing wore out they substituted dressed buckskins and moccasins. After several weeks they returned to San Antonio, and the Citizens assisted Capt. Hays with clothing and rations and induced him to keep his Spy company in the field for their defense. The public arms and stores Consisting of two good Brass eight pound Cannon with Caissons and ammunition complete, also nearly two hundred muskets were placed in charge for Lieut. John R. King commanding Cook's Company to transport them to Gonzales where this troop was disbanded about the middle of May. Rumors of Invasion continued rife, and on Sept 11th, the District Court being in session, the Mexican Gen Adrian Woll commanding eight or ten hundred troops and two pieces of Artillery, having made an entirely new route through the wild country, baffling the vigilance of Capt. Hays and his scouts. Suddenly surprised San Antonio, capturing about fifty-three prisoners including the members of the Court. The news of the advance of the Mexicans was soon known on the Guadalupe, and spread rapidly through Texas. Our survivors of the Santa Fe Expedition had just arrived home, and although they knew that if again captured in arms against Mexico there would be no reprieve for them, they were generally desirous to be in readiness for the expected strife. As the further advances of the enemy must if possible be checked, the town of Sequin was chosen as the rendezvous, and men gathered there led by Lieut. Henry E. McCullock, Capt. James Bird, Lieut John R. King, Capt. Callahan and others, also the noted Capt. Ewan Cameron with his well tried followers came up from Victoria: Capt Hays kept up communication with San Antonio [See DeWitt Colony Captains].

As subsistence must be provided Major Bennet assisted by his old Santa Fe Comrades established a Commissariat and carefully utilized the small supply of corn and beef that could be obtained. Hays Spies having reported a contemplated raid by the enemy upon Gonzales, McCullock with his Company headed off the raiders and saved that town. The Volunteers numbering two hundred and three, organized, chosing Col. Matthew Caldwell as Commander. Sept 16 Late on Saturday the command marched onward, and during the bright night the moon being nearly full took a good position on the east side of the Salado five or six miles from San Antonio, above the old road.

John W. Smith from town brought the information that the enemy numbered twelve hundred Regulars, two pieces of Artillery, two or three hundred rancheros, Indians, and low Mexicans, this statement was corroborated by Hays and McCulloch who reconnoitering found the enemy marching in full force to attack us.

THE BATTLE. The Enemy crossed the Salado above our position, and with bands of martial music formed on the beautiful open prairie four hundred yards east of us cutting us off from our Settlements and preventing all reinforcements from joining us. There were a few scattering mezquit trees on the field. The Cannon well masked were placed within point blank range, and close upon their left was a long hollow with mezquit trees in it extending past our line down to the creek affording great advantage to their Indians and Rancheros on that part of the field. In order to deceive them as to our fewness in numbers we were leisurely paraded over some knolls on our left in their plain view: and we soon found that it took some good fighting to prevent them from occupying those knolls which commanded part of our lines. We retained the place of our guard fire, the guard being a detail of two or three from each Company posted at the extreme right on the edge of a hollow that covered the enemy's left, and this proved one of the hottest places of the battle. Cameron's company was on the right, Bird's on the right center, and the other companies on the line to the left: I was in Bird's company and before the cannon opened fire upon us I had a good opportunity to count the enemy's detachment under Cordova of eighty-five Cherokee Indians and renegade Mexicans who crawled Indian fashion into the hollow on our right.

Apprehending the capture of our horses by this force a detail of fifteen of whom I was one was ordered to guard against surprise in that quarter; while there and before the battle became very hot two of our men Steve Jouett a San Jacinto soldier and Simon Cockerell passed the guard going down the creek "to shoot some of them Indians on their own account" the former was killed, the latter with a broken arm narrowly escaped capture [Cockerell in his critical encounter concealed himself beneath a leaning tree, on the bank of the Salado, keeping entirely underwater only leaving his nose and mouth above water. The Indians passed on, and he came back after dark covered with mud, wet and wounded]. The enemy opened fire with their cannon at short range, followed by charges of Cavalry and Infantry upon our center and left wing, while on our right they poured down the hollow (before mentioned) to drive us from our guard-fire; Cameron's company here maintained successful resistance, the chieftain Cordova and many of his band were slain here. Our men at the center and on the left laid low until after the discharge of the cannon, then upon the charge of the enemy in close quarters the firing became general and the foe was compelled to fall back to their cannon leaving the ground strewn with their dead and wounded, their Bugles and even their muster-rolls falling into our hands. These charges were repeated and the fighting severe: on our right the enemy being strengthened by a band of Carrizo Indians charged us repeatedly but failed to drive us from our position.

THE DAWSON MASSACRE. Our communication being cut off we were not aware of the approach of Capt. Dawson and his fifty-three men who were coming to assist us: they rode up within hearing of the conflict but the Smoke was so dense they could not see our position, and before they were aware they were too near the Mexicans to effect a retreat, and were surrounded by the enemy's cavalry. Being partially sheltered by a few mezquit trees they kept the enemy at bay with their rifles until the Mexican artillery was brought to bear upon them and necessitated their surrender; as is well known they were nearly all massacred. Late in the afternoon the enemy moved off to San Antonio, taking with them several cart loads of their dead and wounded, leaving many more lying too near our lines for them to recover: their loss was at least sixty killed and as many wounded. Our wounded were sent to the town of Sequin, and our brave frontiersman Steve Jouett we buried on the battle field on the bank of the Salado. Through John W. Smith we learned that the enemy were preparing for an immediate retreat, the Court and the principal citizens had all been hurried off to Mexico, and we were shocked at the recital of the incidents of the Dawson Massacre, and we resolved to follow the enemy at all hazards. Thus was fought the last pitched battle of the Republic, in Texas Settlements, between hastily gathered Volunteers and regular Mexican troops, and having about the same disparity of numbers as in the old time fights, say one to six. The effect upon the Mexicans, in promptly meeting and preventing their Continuous raids upon our towns, in causing them to fall back with considerable loss of men and demoralization of their command, entitles this battle to honorable mention among the fights of the Republic: its connexion with the Dawson Massacre, and also the carrying off so many of our citizens revives old memories among the people of San Antonio. April 21st 1900.

From Life of Robert Hall by "Brazos" 1898: I have talked with men who were in this battle [Battle of Medina in 1813], and we have often around our camp fires compared this terrible affair with the battle of Salado which occurred twenty-nine years afterwards. In the Salado the Mexicans were commanded by the veteran French general, Woll, who boasted that he had learned the science of war under Marshal Soult. He commanded 1200

regular troops. Nearly all historians claim that we had 300 Texans on the field, but I am positive that our force has been over estimated. Our commander, old Paint Caldwell, was equal to a thousand men. No man who ever stood on Texas soil was his equal in battle. As soon as the bullets began to whistle he seemed to grow taller and look grander. I don't think it ever occurred to him that he might be hit. He rode over a battlefield as unconcerned as if he had been out cornshucking. His nerves must have been made of iron; nothing disturbed him. This battle occurred on the 18th of September, 1842.

They got news in San Antonio of the advance of Gen. Woll, and Jack Hays was sent out on the Laredo road to watch the enemy. Hays missed Gen. Woll's column entirely. The strategic old rascal had made a new road from the Rio Grande to San Antonio, and fell upon the city like a flash of lightning. District Court was in session, and he captured the court and all the lawyers and sent them off as prisoners to the dungeons of Mexico. The news reached us at Gonzales, and we at once fell into line. Capt. Caldwell himself came to my house after me. I joined him next day. He was camped on a creek about eighteen miles northeast of San Antonio. Hays joined us that night. The next day we organized and old Paint Caldwell was elected commander of the army. He at once sent Jack Hays forward to select a battlefield. Hays selected a crossing on the Salado, about two miles above where the "Sunset" road crosses. About midnight we took up the line of march, keeping away from the road. We came in sight of the enemy about daylight. We were awful hungry, and French Smith ran a fat cow into camp and shot her down. While we were skinning and broiling beef we heard the rattle of Jack Hays' musketry. He had already engaged the enemy. Old Sol Simmons was a large man and a powerful eater. He was terrible hungry, and he had a dozen big pieces of the fat cow on the fire. When the firing commenced he swallowed the big pieces of meat without chewing it. Capt. Caldwell ordered the horses tied in the bottom, and the men formed in line of battle. Jack Hays had joined us by this time. The Mexicans appeared in front. There was a skirmish at a distance of about 600 yards. Old Sol Simmons, who was still swallowing beef, was the first man hit. He roared that he was a dead man, and began to throw up that beef. It looked as if he had enough cow inside of him to have killed him. He was hit in the stomach and the bullet was never found, yet the man got well [A variant of this story was related by Nathan Boone Burkett in his memoirs of the battle--WLM].

The Mexican infantry and artillery advanced and took up a position on a slight elevation. We heard the rattle of musketry and cannon east of us. We could not imagine what was going on. We afterwards learned that Capt. Dawson, with forty-five men, was trying to cut his way through the Mexican lines. The world knows the story: They were all massacred. I think Alse Miller and a man named Moods [Gonsalvo Woods] escaped. Caldwell put me over in the bottoms to watch the Indians. These Indians killed a young fellow named Jett who was trying to join us. Caldwell formed his men under the banks in two ranks. One ran would advance and fire while the other loaded. Old Parson Carroll, a Methodist preacher, would step up on the bank and fire, and shout "God take your souls." Caldwell sent me up the creek to see if there was an attempt to surround us. I climbed up a tree and saw a Mexican slipping up on another scout named Hill. I got my gun and shot at him. He dropped over on the horn of his saddle. We found him next day seated against a tree with the gun across his lap. It was one of the finest rifles I ever saw.

I heard a general advance and I went under the bank and leaned against a little pecan tree. The tree I first picked out to protect me was shot entirely off by a cannon shot. The Mexicans came up within forty yards of our lines, cavalry, infantry and artillery. Our boys stood firm. One column under Old Cordova advanced upon us along a ravine that intersected the creek. Willis Randall shot and killed Old Cordova. He was a Nacogdoches Spaniard and we all knew him. We killed and wounded a great many of the enemy when they made the general advance. The Mexicans fell back.

That night the moon was shining very brightly. A soldier named Conn and I went out in front on the battlefield and we found that the enemy had fallen back on San Antonio. We found a great many dead and wounded. We camped on the field and the next day we received news that Gen. Woll had evacuated San Antonio and was making a forced march toward the Rio Grande. We went around the head of the San Antonio river and struck Gen. Woll's trail. Reinforcements were joining us every hour, until we were about six hundred strong. Gen. Woll crossed the Medina and halted on a splendid natural position. The two armies were in sight of each other for two days, and strangely enough the Texans did not attack the enemy. I think there were about a half a dozen men who wanted to have command of the army, and they were constantly caucusing and trying in some way to remove old Paint Caldwell. Woll began to retreat again. We skirmished with his rear guard. Jack Hays charged a column of Mexicans, but suffered a repulse from lack of proper support. Our officers constantly differed with each other, and many wanted to play the general; consequently Gen. Woll marched away from us. Big Foot Wallace was in this battle, and Creed Taylor was badly wounded in the hand. I saw a man named Lucky shot through the body. I was sure he was killed, but he recovered. This ended the affair of the Salado, but it was not the end of Woll's invasion. A large force

gathered on the Rio Grande and attacked the town of Mier. Everybody knows the story of the Mier prisoners. Col. Seguin, a Mexican gentleman who had been prominent in Texas, went away with Gen. Woll. I don't think the Texans treated Seguin right. Henry McCulloch was in the battle of the Salado. This was the last time that Mexican troops were ever seen in San Antonio.

Rufus Perry on Capt. Billingsley and the Dawson Massacre (from the Valentine Bennet Scrapbook by Miles Bennet in the The Center for American History, University of Texas Austin, date and newspaper unknown). Mr. Perry on Capt. Billingsley. Hye Postoffice, Blanco Co., Tex. Aug 7—To the News: In one of your recent issues was published a letter written by Mr. A. L. Moore of Lagrange, Tex. Concerning the Dawson massacre and in which the actions of Captain Jesse Billingsley were criticized I am not acquainted with Mr. A.L. Moore, but knew John H. Moore, the first settler in Fayette county and am well acquainted with Hon. L.W. Moore, now living in that county. I am myself a Texas veteran and very likely the only man living who can give a correct account of where Captain Billingsley and his men were at the time of Dawson's massacre, which took place two miles east of the Salado. Returning from an Indian campaign with Captain Burleson's command to the town of Bastrop in 1842, we learned that General Waul had taken San Antonio and that Captain Billingsley of whose company my father, William M. Perry, was a member, with his men had left Bastrop a few hours before we reached there. Captain Burleson lived about ten miles from Bastrop and went home and I myself being the only one able to get a fresh horse immediately followed Billingsley's Company, overtaking them at the Alligator waterhole on Cedar creek in Bastrop county, and was by Billingsley placed in the advance, and without meeting with any opposition, reached Seguin a few hours before I reached there. After I left Seguin with a Tonkaway Indian, I heard the sound of a cannon and went back to report this fact to Captain Billingsley. He ordered Sam Walker, afterward a captain, and who was killed in the Mexican war; a man by the name of Flint, myself and the Tonkaway Indian, to go on and learn what was happening. We four reached the top of a hill and from there could see the battleground, just in time to see that Dawson had raised the white flag. We saw then Alsey Miller ran out; saw him get another horse, and halloed at him. Miller, however, did not come to us, because, as he afterward told me, he believed us to be Indians. Captain Billingsley and his men at that time were at least three miles from the battleground, did not know what was going on and what had happened until I reported to him the facts. He repaired to the battleground, and there met Walker, who had been sent by me to find Caldwell, and who had found him and returned with four of his men to the battleground before we reached there, and we all buried the dead. That night, we went into Caldwell's camp, and next day took up the march in pursuit of the Mexicans, nothing occurring until we overtook them at the head of the Hondo. Mr. Moore in his letter also states that Sam Lenkey was wounded with Captain Hays when fighting on the Hondo they captured a cannon and tried to hold it. This is also a mistake. Sam Lenkey was wounded by the rear guard of the Mexicans before we reached the head of the Hondo. The men wounded with Captain Hays when the cannon was taken were A. Gibson of Gonzales, Judge Hemphill and one Harel of Austin, Travis county, Tex. Trusting that the foregoing will be inserted in your paper, which I have read for a great number of years, and that history will give the facts as they occurred. I remain, very respectfully. RUFUS PERRY.

James Ramsay to Miles S. Bennet 1882. Manuscripts of the Mexican War sent by James Ramsay, Gonzales, Texas, to Miles S. Bennet, Cuero, Texas, September 20, 1882, and the letter of transmission. (From The Center for American History, University of Texas Austin, unedited text and spellings except for hyphens and bracketed comments which were added by WLM for improved readability)

Gonzales Texas September 20th/82

Mr M Bennet Dear Sir I send you the manuscript according to promise---went home soon aft you left and little in finding them and in looking over them found them Interesting than I expected---recalling Old Friend and Old sceans passed thorough regret now that at that time had finished on to the return Back to Gonzales when Events were more fresh in the Memory---You can use them if in any way suiteable for your purposes, Some mistakes in diction and spelling names and dates correct. You will see alusions and Incents of your worthy Father was charestic of the Old Major----after you have exemained these contents let me know your candid openeon and oblidge---
Yours very Respectfully James Ramsay

Manuscript of the Mexican War by James Ramsay. Mister Editor if not Intruding too much on your time and usful paper please Insert the following remarks and Facts called forth by an Act of the last Legislature of Texas, setting forth that all those who particepated in the Battle of St Jacinto and in any wise afterwards by active Service in the Field in expelling the Mexicans when Invading the Soil of Texas, and the Mier Prisoners should be entialed to so

much Penesion per Annum by making the Proper Shewing to the Comptroller of the right of these Claims. Having no copy of the Act by me I am not quite certain if the above is the exact words at any rate that is the purport and Intent if I mistake not. Shortly afterwards the Comptroller Issues a Circuler to the Effect that no one except the St Jacinto Soldier and Mier Priesnor was entitled to the benefits of said act, if this is so and the Framers of this Act so intended to benefit only these two classes of old Texians to the utter exclusion of others who perialed there lives in the Battlefield in the Spring Summer & Fall of 1841 & 1842 if such was realy the Intention of the Framers of the Act they are wofully Ignorant of the Early History of Texas or intended a class Legisuleation. Why Ignore the St Fee Prisoners and there perials and Privations.

That Expedition was Organized and Equiped by order and expence of the Government under General Lamar administration whether the best Policy or not that is not the Question now. Was the Mier Expedition authoriezed by the Texas Government No Sir it was General Somervells express orders from President Houston to proceed only to the left Bank of the Rio Grand, Lorado was occupied---no oppesetion was offered---all was accomplished that was properly authorized by the President, unfortunately for the Heroic Captain Cameron and his Brave Assocets who Volunteered crossed the River and by Mexican Duplicity an perfiedy surrendered themselves Priesnors when victory was almost on there side thus accompelshing nothing for the Peace of Texas but untold suffering & Death in its worst Form to the most of them, to the Survivers of that Gallent Band it is well for there County to make some remuneration and acknowledgement of there Sacrefices but not say to the others how ever great your Service and prevatures were we pass you by

In the first of March 1842 Basques [Vasquez] reached St Anton [San Antonio] with some 500 Cavelary of the Mexican regular Army gave out (and was believed at the time) to be the advance guard of a regelar Inveading Army some where about 100 men Texians without regelar Organaseation brought the only small Cannon from there and what amuneation there was blew up a store by order of the Owener McTeague so the goods might not fall in to the hands of the Mexicans as the Texians left Town on the north East Side---so the Enemy entered on the opposite---all Amercians and most Europeans left St Antonio passing through Sequin & Gonzales---this created a general Panic amongst the Citizens expesial the Famielies the most of whome left the Gaudelupe River---no settelers than being on St Marcas above Uncle Adams Truemalls [Adam Zumwalt] some went down on the Lavaca River some on the Colorado & some further---on the 9th March some 200 or more men had reached Sequin and rumers were circuleating the Mexicans & Greasers had left Bexar there was no kind of organesation---some of our leading men of Western Texas were then Presener in Mexico of the St Fee Expedition---other good & tried Texians (very much to be lamented) were at Fued amongst themselves

Ben McCullouh [McCulloch] & William Morrison had penetrated as pied in the Basues [Vasquez] Camp but were discovered before much could be learned of the Force & inteanetion of the Enemy and only by good horsemanship and cool courage saved themselves---the Texeians broke up in parties and returned to Gonzales---here men from Lavaca and Colorado were coming in only---one night spent in moulding Bulets---Cooking a few Corn Dodgers (happy were they that had corn and a Steel Mill in those days) dried Beef & good water in our Gourds was not always plenty---crossing the Gaudloupe below Town at the old St Ann ford than on to St Antonio by the old 40 Mile water hole with all speed encamping below the Mission of Conception---there General Ed. Burleson Took Command---the Gonzales Co Orginezed Captain Friar commanding---by this time it was well known that this was no regeler Invasion all were anxieus to follow the enemy to the Rio Grand it was Genl Burleson wish to do so if ordered & supported by the government---no such order came for 2 or 3 weeks up and down camping on the St Antonio River living on Beef alone & no Salt---Parties from the Brassos & Colerad River were returning home till all broke up and were about to leave the Frontier entirely unprotected---Some sort of order came to General Harrison autherezing him to endeavor to orgenize three Companys to Range West of the Medina and to the Rio Frieo promesing them some Rations & clothing

So two Company were formed by volunteering some 40 or more count---Col Jack Hays one L P Cook the other imeadtely on being orginesed Capt Cook went to Austin to see His family & never returned---the Command devolved on Ist Lieutenant---the Major Neighbors whose West Point way of standing guard in an Indian Country did not quite Suit the Boys---If some times high words loaded guns presented not blook drawn and on the whole the Boys fared pretty well---our Camps were on the waters of the Atascosa Ranging princaply on the Lorado Road on to the Frieo and Neueesses and half way up to the Presidio Road where Col Jack Hays & Company ranged, we were promised Rations & Clothing got a little meal coffee & salt plent of fat Buck Turkey Mexican Wild Hog and Honey, no clothes---by dressing Buck skin we kept the worst of the Sun off till at last I do not know if we could muster half a Dozen pair shoes hats or under clothing---it was agreed the whole Company shoulit proceed to St Antonia there we

by order of some authoreties---I suppose the City Officers sent all arms & amuniation belong to the Republic to Gonzales under Esart [escort?] of the Company now commanded by John R. King 2nd Leitin---the arms were some way between one & two hundred Texas Muskets new packed in Boxes 2 Fine Brass 8 lb cannon couplet with there Cassions reaching Gonzales about the middle of May---each Man got a discharge signed by Leit King calling for 37 days pay as Mounted gun men whilst we have been from home over two months---in years afterwards some got about 30 or 40 Dollars---I may say Col Hays by agreement with Merchants of St Antonio furnishing some clothing & and rations remained out all summer this giving security to some extent to the frontier settlers---rumeours were frequent of another Raiding party or Inveasions about the first of September the court being in session---Genl Woll with some 8 hundred or a thousand Regulars Cavalry & Infantry 2 small pieces of Arteelary took St Antonia with some 60 Prieseoners Including the Members of Court who had determined to Make a Stand in the Court House

Fortunately Col Hays and most of his boys kept out of that trap in the Court House---news of the affair reached Gonzales simeasteaneously the St Fee Priesoners were returning home---Col Caldwell & Major Bennet the former with what men could be hastily got together with there riflies the women and children moulding Bullets and those who had corn were Rich to have a few Poons of Corn Bread in there Wallets with the Texas never failing Dried Beef, Major Bennet remained at Sequin by agreement to try in some way to procure some coffee salt & some meal by the aid of that useful but despised Macheine vulgarly called a steel Mill---at any rate Beef either on foot or Dried had to be forth coming from the Gaudlupe River for the Mexicains had and were driving them all off the St Antoine River, what corn was planted was an abundant yeild the weather very warm and considerable Rain not enough to raise the Rivers

Mr Editer it may look Eggostecial to use the term I we & us in what follows but my motive plain facts without fear or favor to any one to deal justly to the Living place those men who Fell in decisive and last Fight for Texas as a Republic on Record and who have since gont to the Lands of the Lord your writer or corrspondant the Late B B Peck, Miles Bennett, Henry Girven John Andrew Commings, the last a young man just returned a St Fee Preseoner this was the man who had Pleged ourselves one another to be True to the cause of Texas as well as each other in Fight and to the Death

We started Tuesday afternoon Sept 12th slept or camped in Col John Kings Gallery it raining pretty much all Evening & Night next day early got on the Road---the Sun very warm---camped at Sequin by W Days and as were eager for an early start to reach Caldwell hearing that He and men were on the St Clair or Seawillow---the morning was very cloudy & Sultry, and we were eager to be off, but the Best Laid schemes of Mice and Men gang aft a-gley up comes the Old Major---Boys Caldwell and his men have nothing to eat---a Rumur has just come in and you must stop and drive some Beevs---we remonestreates it was to Fight Mexicans not to be CowBoys and off we started. Holt cried the Major I am your Superior Officer besides they have had nothing for near two days you go out in the Praries there with Willie King drive in some Beevs into the Pen keep then together and drive them on before you and I will promise you plenty of Fighting---it Will not all be over before you reach there and when you start you Miles come by my Quarters & I will give you a little coffee in case you are chilly or wounded, we got started with two of the most contrarary animals ever necked together by this time a heavy Rain with cold north wind blowing by the time---we reached the River up comes Miles with something in his saddlebags---mark the saddlebags---something of Civilisation in Texas but the contents Mr Editor was it Rot-Gut Monghelia or Glen-livet---no sir nothing short of the material that Old Texian Love so well cheers Strenthens and Breaks the Studies as old W Tennie used to say, two lbs Coffee---we had got an Elephant how could we parch paund in a Tin cup let alone cooking both---all know it, still the hoss helped us amid wind and rain with the Beeves who would go any way exept the straight one, reaching Caldwell's Camp in a little bend of the St Clair 3 or 4 miles to the left of the St Antoine Road a yell was raised at sight of our two Pets whoe were very gentle---after driving some 25 miles in three hours you could not scarcely tell where the Beeves were killed---the hide cut up in Ropes and Laraots---the enwards cleaned and cooked so hungry were the men

Genl Woll had dispatched Col John Sequin with some 300 men towards Gonzales as sectreety as possable to capture the place and take the Public Arms there. Caldwell learned of this sent spies out to trail up the Renegade Sequin---they returned into Camp that Evening reported struck & followed the trail on towards the 40 Mile Water hole and there the Mexicans had returned back to St Antonia, next day Friday some of Col Hays men came in who had avoid being captured when the Court & Citizens of St Antonia surrendered---pursued by the Mexican had to make to the Hills reach Caldwell Camp on the St Clair at the Sequin & St Antonia road crossing for three or four days they had not eat any thing---two of there names I remember Fitzgerald and Lavala the latter a native of Virgenia I think and was of such men as Walker Gelespie and others of Jack Hays Company---on Friday Caldwell that night

moved camps above the Road and there had an organeseation in Company with Captain and Lieutenents and a Council of War held to Fight as soon as the Mexecian could be induced to come out of Town for no more men could be expected except from the Colorader and it might be some time before they could reach us---on Saturday moved off above the road some distance whilst some were out scouting & spying others doing camp duty little cooking As do the two Beeves being near if not gone, some one smelt Miles Saddle Bags and the Coffee was minus

Sam Witt & Dob Adams and now the Company were Capt Cameron and Lieutenant Anderson both Scotch born some 30 men English Irish Welsh German French and Americans no Yankees them days---Capt Friar Cuero Company about 40, Capt Adam Zumwalt Lavaca Co 25 men---Capt Jim Bird Lietents Callegghan [Callaghan] & Cushing Gonzales & Sequin Company---D C S Brown of Gonzales Army Surgen and Aid to Col Caldwell--- Col Jack Hays & Lietent H C McCulloch of the St Antonie Co or Spy Company---Brother Murrell Baptist Minister, Chaplin and one of the best Fighter---Rev Brother Carroll our Circut Preacher in the Gonzales Comp---Col Caldwell was considered Col commanding without any regular Election but the Contest was very close for Major or Second in command between John Henry Brown of the Lavaca Company and C C Colley of the Gonzales---twice the vote was taken and Numbers were counted correctly--- Major Colley was Elected by 3 of a Majority too the number of command including officers 203---some very young lads Jesse Zumwalt, one of Capt Friers Sons and Richard Barnett of my relation---Close as the contest was for Major no unduly Feelings between the Parties nor there Supporters---J H Brown kept his place in the Ranks in the Lavaca Company.

this was about four or five P, M, Saturday after dark the Command took up the line of March toward the Salado some 14 or 15 miles to the nearest Point where a good position could be taken---no road very good travelling the grass fine Mesquite trees & Bushes plenty some Live Oaks & open Pararie---it was clear Bright night the moon near full the Breeze had died away plesent ridding 2 a breast in close order perfect silence the horses seemed awed in to silence---a considerable trail was made, about Midnight the command reached the Salado some 5 or 6 miles from St Antonia---the same above the road there the halt was ordered---Stake horse close no fire nor loud talking guard placed both Picket and inside the forme on horseback and ordered to range back on the trail between 1 1/2 miles and I may state an occurance caused by unthought of caution and want of cool self-command which came pretty near proving fatle to some of us, one Picket three were sent back on the trail two of these were B B Perk on His Plumb Creak Fight Mule and by the way one of the best Little Light Grays Mules ever Commanches rod but when one Lose it took near half a Dozen of our best Boys to rope the Critter, the other a young man White from Curo on a large white American horse being over a mile from camp---one horseman was seen by them coming on the Trail and imedeatly the Stranger unthoughtly raised a yell ridding towards them at full speed---White on his large horse took fight with all speed leaving Perk on the little Mule the other on his Mustang to follow as best they could---White rushed in through the Picketed horse stampeding them in through camp Past the guard shouting Mexicians Indians---your correspondant had been just returned off guard laid his blanket down dropped down lying on his Back scearly asleep when the aful and strange noises of Horses running every way---men crying to stop them, at the time my eyes opened a large white horse was in the act running over me one fore foot as set down close to the right side barly missing the Breast, jumping up Capt Callaghan being officer of the Guard was standing close by as if I was hurt replied I believe not---what is the Matter---don't know, White came up and Stopped ---the Capt Callegghan cooley taking his pipe out of his mouth called on the men not be excited---secure there horses---demanding of White what reason he had for acting so---Fear & excitement had rather stoped---a ready utterance except some broken words Mexecians or coming---the Little Gray Mule & Rider with Partner rode up---reported some one yelling & ridding behind them they thought the indeveadul [individual] are Amerecian and had tryed to stop White---there comes the Intruder who proves to be a Texian---sorrows to have been ineventionly [eventually?] the cause of so much alarm---fortunotly none of the horses got away

all was quite today, at Early dawn French Smith with some more of the Sequin Boys went to try and find some Beeves---abought Eight oclock some 4 or 6 were drove in to camp and imeadeatly slaughtered---Hungry men are not very particelor---some had fires kindled and boiling meat before the animals were skined and before any had to eat the alarm of the enemy coming was given for some fifteen or twenty munitus want of order and excitement prevailed---the yelling of the Mexecian Scoupet almost like cat squealing could be heard and the sharp crake of the Texas Rifle ocaseionely heard we then learned some of Col Hays leading Boys had gone toward Town shooting there Rifles and Phalling Woll to come out for a Fight and now this was the Mexican Cavelery about 500 driving in our Pickets and Hays men---in Major Colleys commanding voice keep cool men and fall in to Lines---Fires were suddenly left as well as half Butcher Beeves some held on to there peices of meat half cooked & ocaseonaly taking a mouthful---the firing from the Enemy was very heavy for twenty or thirty munits at this time were under the light Bluff slopping grandly from the prarie to the Timber on the River bottom which was not I suffer much more one

hundred yards wide in front of us near one hundred yards. Col Caldwell made his only war speech---it was short and to the point---I could only hear from the hooping & Hurring of the Boys the concluding sentences Fight for your Homes and Families and give the Hell---there was something very solom with great courage as well as Chivaraly mixed with a little of the comic in the appearance of the Col---above the common hight of men a little slim dark hair now mixed with white patches mor partulary in the Beard by which he got the Sobriquite of Old Paint---no Huntley was on---shirt sleeves rolled up---swing his Rifle in his right hand and gestuleting considerable---no fear manifesed in his of Maj Colley in faith the adoucious courage of the one with cool Bravery of the other restored order & confedence in there men---at once some one hallowed out them and some other of the officer to come between the lines under the little bank where the lines were for at that time they were a good mark for the Enemy whoe were keeping up considerable firing.

From Rangers and Pioneers of Texas by A.J. Sowell 1884 (based on memories of Andrew Jackson Sowell, a participant). On September 11, 1842, the Mexicans under General Adrian Wall, very unexpectedly to the Texans, advanced and captured San Antonio. The district court was in session, and the members were taken prisoners. The news flew down the country, and spread from settlement to settlement, and, once more the call to arms was sounded along the border to repel Mexican invasion. This call was, as ever, promptly obeyed by the brave pioneers of the Guadalupe, San Marcos, and Colorado valleys. And once more the gallant Hays, Caldwell and others, rallied their chosen scouts and rangers around them. They rendezvoused at Seguin, and all night long before the start on the following day, men were up busy making preparations to meet once more the dusky sons of Mexico on the battlefield. There was a great scarcity of horses on account of the recent Indian raids, and men gave large sums for Spanish ponies that would carry them to San Antonio. All night men were coming in from the east, and but few slept that night. Rifles were cleaned, bullets molded and provisions cooked. Those that had no horses were going here and there trying to make trades, offering land, and anything they possessed for ponies, which could now be bought for \$25. Two men fought over a stray horse which happened to be in town until neither one was able to go. Andrew Sowell was sick at this time, and told his brother, Asa, whose horse had been stolen by Indians, that he might have his horse as he was not able to go, but next morning when they were about to start, said he could not stand it, and, rising from his bed, dressed himself, got his rifle and pistols, and was soon on his way to the Salado.

Mathew Caldwell was in command of the force, which amounted to about 200 men. Caldwell advanced to the Salado, and took up a strong position on this creek, about seven miles northeast of San Antonio. While encamped here, Creed Taylor went down to the creek, a short distance below the camp, for the purpose of washing out his shirt, and not having a change in camp, had to wait for it to dry. While doing so, he ascended a pecan tree, for the purpose of filling his pockets with pecans, but as soon as he arose above the level of the prairie, was fired at from camp, the balls cutting the limbs around him. He hastened down, donned his half dry shirt, and proceeding to camp, demanded an explanation, and was told that some Irish recruits from Goliad, who had just arrived, had taken him for a Mexican spying out the camp, and commenced the fusillade upon him.

Captain Jack Hays then advanced with about fifty men to San Antonio, and drew the Mexicans out. In his (Captain J. C. Hay's) company, H. E. McCulloch was first lieutenant, and C. B. Acklin orderly sergeant. They were chased back from within half a mile of the Alamo, by 400 cavalry, to the Salado. McCulloch covered the retreat with ten picked men, and they had a lively time. The names of the ten men are as follows: William Polk, Green McCoy, Stuart Foley, C. B. Acklin, Cloy Davis, Creed Taylor, Josiah Taylor, Pipkin Taylor, Rufus Taylor, and James Taylor. The Mexicans made a desperate effort to cut Hays off, by passing up on his right flank. McCulloch kept between him and the Mexicans, sending couriers every half mile or so urging him to put for the timber, and finally when the timber was reached, McCulloch had only one man with him, Creed Taylor. These two were targets for the Mexicans for the last half mile, and at from 100 to 200 paces, there must have been from 100 to 200 shots fired at them on the run, but fortunately not a ball struck man or horse; but Creed Taylor was wounded in the battle which followed on the creek. The men in camp had killed some beef cattle and were engaged in cooking and eating when Hays and McCulloch dashed in, closely pursued by the Mexican cavalry. Every man was soon at his post and ready for action. The whole Mexican army then advanced from San Antonio, and crossing the creek, took up a position on the hillside, east of Caldwell's position. There they planted a battery and opened fire on the Texans, but without effect; for Caldwell's men were protected by the creek bank, behind which they were formed. The only danger they had to guard against was the falling limbs which the cannon shots tore off from the large pecan trees over their heads. Seeing he could not dislodge them with artillery, the Mexican commander ordered a charge. The Texans as yet had not fired a shot. The cannons ceased, bugles sounded, and the rush of tramping feet was heard in the flat, as the Mexicans advanced to the charge.

Caldwell gave orders for half the men to reserve their fire, while those in front were to step back after a discharge and reload, while those with loaded rifles were to man the bank. The Mexicans had to advance very close before they could see the Texans; and then firing their escopetes, they fell back before the deadly fire of the rifles. A loud, keen yell went up from the Texans as the Mexicans broke and dashed back in disordered squads out of range, leaving quite a number killed and wounded behind them. They rallied again on the crest of the ridge and formed, and the officers were seen riding to and fro among them. The Texans elated with their success had no fears of the final issue, although greatly outnumbered. They continued to whoop and yell at the Mexicans, and some resumed their repast of beef, bread and strong coffee, which had been interrupted by the advance of the Mexican army. The Mexican cavalry kept dashing about and prancing around, but kept out of range. Finally they stopped on the hill some distance up the creek. Green McCoy noticing this, came to Andrew Sowell and proposed to him that they would lead their horses up the creek a short distance, tie them so that they would be at hand in case of need, and then slip within rifle shot of the Mexican cavalry, get a good shot each, and then fall back to their horses, and make their escape in case they were pursued. Andrew agreed to this readily, and they left the camp, keeping out of sight of the Mexicans until they went far enough, and then tied their horses to a mesquite tree. They could see part of the cavalry through the bushes, not far off, and bending low, started to slip within range. They had taken but a few steps when they were started by a low, keen whistle near them, and hastily looking around, saw a company of Mexican infantry in fifty paces of them, where they had been concealed in the high grass, and had just risen up and whistled to them like a hunter would to a deer, to make it stop until he could shoot it. They saw the Mexicans were fixing to fire, and sprang towards their horses and bent low for a few seconds and received the first fire. The bark and mesquite beans fell on their hats which were cut off by the bullets, but neither one of them was touched, and drawing their knives, quick as lightning almost, cut their ropes and mounted the terrified horses, which had begun to rear and plunge about. They were young, active and good riders, or else they would never have been able to mount under the circumstances. They received the second fire from the Mexicans as they bent low in their saddles and dashed off. The balls cut the air around them, but still they were unhurt. Andrew ventured one look behind as they started, and some of the Mexicans were so near that he said he could see halfway down the barrels of the big-mouthed escopetes as the Mexicans presented them to fire. They dashed into camp just as the Mexicans were again advancing to charge; but as before, they could not stand the unerring aim of the riflemen, and were again driven back with great loss.

General Cordova whom Burleson fought at Mill creek, was killed in the charge. He had taken refuge behind a small mesquite in the retreat, to avoid a discharge, and was killed when he attempted to leave it. Cordova was a noted man in Mexico, and on receipt of the news of his death, the bells were rung in Monterey, and an ode was published to his memory at Saltillo. The Texans, as yet, had not lost a man, and had but few wounded. The Mexicans invariably overshot them, knocking over more coffeepots, which were in the rear, than Texans. Calvin Turner received a glancing shot in the head, and fell; his brother, William, who was near, vainly endeavoring to force a tight ball down his rifle, dropped it, and ran to him, and assisted him to regain his feet, and he soon recovered. The Mexicans, who had been freely supplied with mescal from San Antonio, and being now pretty much under the influence of it, somewhat lost their terror of the Texas rifles, and once more advanced to the charge, yelling like Indians. They threw away their hats and came down the hill bareheaded, and with their dark skins and black hair, very much resembled a host of savages. They made no halt when fired on, but came on like demons, firing their escopetes in the very faces of Caldwell's men, at not more than fifteen paces, and for a few moments the cracking of rifles and the yells of the combatants were terrific. But drunk or sober, they could not stand such a deadly fire at short range, and again fled out of reach, followed by scattering shots and loud yells.

It seems somewhat surprising that Caldwell's 200 men could defeat such a large force of Mexicans, numbering nearly a thousand men, but their superior marksmanship was one thing; and they were all true and tried men; had all seen service before, some having been with Bowie at Mission Concepcion and the storming of San Antonio; some in the charge at San Jacinto and Plum Creek, and nearly all had fought Indians, and were splendid shots. And here were the, gallant Caldwell, Hays, and the McCullochs, whom none could surpass as commanders in such warfare. Santa Anna, while a prisoner, and bitterly lamenting the destruction of his army, said: "Why, a Texan would think he had made a bad shot if he did not hit a Mexican's eye a hundred yards."

During the retreat, after this charge, one Mexican being considerably behind, some one called out, "Who has a loaded rifle?" Andrew Sowell, who had just loaded, stepped forward and took a careful aim at the retreating Mexican, and fired. At the crack of the gun the Mexican jumped forward, clapped his hands to his back, and after-running half bent for a short distance, fell forward on his face. Miles Dikes, who was standing just behind Andrew, watching the effect of the shot, clapped him on the shoulder, and said: "There; that's the way to do it

Andrew; you got him." In this last charge a good many Mexicans were killed and wounded near the bank of the creek, behind which the Texans were posted. French Smith, who was walking about among them, picked up a small wounded Mexican and brought him down the hill into the camp and laid him down. He was a small man, and had on a fancy jacket. He was shot in the breast, and was suffering great pain. He jabbered Mexican all the time, and eyed the long rifles of the Texans, who stood around him, and when some one lit a pipe and commenced smoking, he, with great pain, raised himself to a sitting position, and asked for a shuck and some tobacco, and this being given him, made a cigarette, and calmly sat there and smoked it, with a rifle ball through his body, occasionally making some remark in Spanish, and pointing to the wound in his breast.

Just before the fight commenced, one of Caldwell's scouts, named Jett, was cut off from the camp and killed by a small band of Indians, who were secreted in the brush down the creek. One man was shot in the stomach, who had that morning eaten a large quantity of fresh beef, and after the doctor had examined him, said it was the most fortunate shots he ever saw. "For," said he, "if it had not been for the beef, the bullet would have killed him, and if it had not been for the bullet, the beef would have killed him." During the progress of the fight, the Texans noticed that the Mexicans moved their artillery, also the cavalry, and a portion of the infantry, and presently they heard cannon shots in the prairie some distance to the east of them. Boom after boom came ringing across the prairie, and the Texans were satisfied that some brave band of men had encountered the Mexicans in trying to join them. But they dared not move from their position for here was the only place where they could successfully fight Wall's army, with his superior force, flanked by large bodies of cavalry, and supported with artillery, which was between them and the brave men who were at this time selling their lives so dearly.

Swift scouts were kept out to watch the movements of the Mexicans, who disappeared from sight after the firing ceased on the prairie, and left Caldwell master of the situation on the creek. A scout came in and reported that the Mexican army had gone back to San Antonio. A small party was then sent out to see what discoveries they could make in the direction of the firing, which they heard on the prairie east of them. One fugitive, Woods, gained Caldwell's line, and reported that Captain Dawson and his company of fifty-two men from Fayette county, had been surrounded and cut to pieces by the Mexicans. The scouts sent out, returned, and reported that thirty-two of Dawson's men were lying dead on the prairie. Z. N. Morrell, the Baptist preacher who was at the Plum Creek fight, was here, with Caldwell, and knowing that Dawson's men were from his neighborhood, and fearing that his son, whom he had left at home, might have followed the ill-fated Dawson, mounted his horse, and in company with others, set out for the scene of the massacre to examine the slain, and to see if his boy was there. The Rev. Morrell was not at home when he heard of the Mexican raid, and came with Caldwell, without acquainting his family of his intentions, as they were some distance off.

Some one told Andrew Sowell that they thought his father-in-law, old man Billy Turner, was among the slain. Andrew knowing the vim of the old man when stirred up, for he had been a soldier under Jackson, and was one of the dragoons who pursued the great chief Weatherford after his defeat, when he made his famous leap off the bluff into the river, and made his escape. He saw Sam Houston wounded at the battle of the Horse Shoe, and was himself wounded at Talladega and Tallahassee, and was with Jackson at New Orleans. Although Andrew could hardly believe it could be the old man, for he left him at Seguin, he hastily mounted his horse and set out, and on reaching the battle-ground and viewing the dead body of the gray-haired old man, it proved to be Zedack Woods, an old man eighty years of age, from La Grange. Z. N. Morrell searched among the dead for his son, and, greatly to his relief, could not find him, but he looked into the faces of his neighbors whom, a few days before, he had left at their homes in good health, and with a prospect of long life before them, now stark and stiff in the battlefield. These gallant patriots from the Colorado valley, were ever ready to peril their lives for their country, and there was hardly a battle of any importance fought in Texas, but what their blood stained the soil. And when the fiery Dawson came among them, they seized their rifles, and told him to lead the way, and rushed day and night to their death.

Yoakum says of this affair:

I just as the fight ceased between Captain Mathew Caldwell's command and the Mexicans, the fearful massacre occurred. Captain Dawson, with fifty-three men from La Grange, in attempting to join Caldwell, was discovered and surrounded by the enemy. Captain Dawson found a grove of mesquite bushes, in which he rallied his men and commenced his defense; but the Mexicans withdrew from the range of the rifles, and poured in upon his unprotected company, a shower of grape-shot. Dawson sent out a white flag but it was fired on. Thirty-two of his men were killed, two or three escaped, and fifteen were taken prisoners. Among those that escaped was Woods, who, in the act of delivering up his arms, received a cut from a sword. He seized a lance in the hands of one of the

enemy, killed the lancer, mounted his horse, and reached the position of Caldwell, in safety.

The people of Seguin watched anxiously for messengers from the scene of action, after the departure of the zoo brave boys under the gallant Caldwell. Only six years had elapsed since nearly that many had perished in the Alamo with the gallant Travis, and they had left as light-hearted and confident as those under Caldwell. And once more the wives and mothers of the Guadalupe valley had to watch and wait with aching hearts for news, every minute expecting the messenger of death to dash in upon them, bringing the sad news of defeat and slaughter like that which befell Travis and Fannin. And they thought their fears were realized when Aulcy Miller rode into town bareheaded and his horse covered with foam, a fugitive from Dawson's battleground, and bringing the news that Dawson's men were nearly all killed, and that he, himself, and one other, alone made their escape by hard and desperate riding. He knew nothing of the fate of Caldwell's men. They heard heavy firing in the direction of the creek, and were pushing rapidly to their assistance, when they were surrounded by the whole Mexican army and cut to pieces. Asa Sowell, father of the writer, gave Miller a fine Mexican hat.

The following is taken from the American Sketch Book:

We are indebted to Major B. P. Dunn for the names of those that were killed from Fayette county with Captain Dawson, on the 18th of September, 1842. They are as follows: Captain Dawson, First Lieutenant Dickerson, Zedack Woods, David Berry, John Slack, John Cummins, Church, Harvey Hall, Robert Barckley, Wesley Scallorn, Eliam Scallorn, Asa Jones, Robert Eastland, Frank Brookfield, George Hill, John W. Penelton, J. B. Alexander, Edmond Timble, Charles Field, Thomas Simms, Butler, John Dancer, and a colored man belonging to the Mavericks. He had been sent out by Mrs. Maverick to communicate with his master, who had been captured while attending court at San Antonio, a few days before, by the Mexicans. His family were living on the Colorado, near Ed Manton's. They had sent this trusty man out, hoping that he might be able to learn something of Maverick. Poor fellow! faithful to his trust to the last, he died with his brave leader, his face to the enemy at the breach of his gun. Zedack Woods, eighty years old, had ridden in a gallop for several miles, keeping up with his company, before reaching the scene of action, eager to relieve Caldwell, bounding on over the prairie to find, late, that they had mistaken the enemy for our forces. The old man fell while loading his gun.

The bones of these brave men now rest on Monument Hill, opposite La Grange. We quote what the publisher of the American Sketch Book says in describing a trip to this place:

While on the bluff, what strange feelings of awe I had while standing at the tomb of that band of heroes (the remains of Captain Dawson's company, and the decimated prisoners), who, when the first tocsin of war sounded, left their homes and loved ones, and, after deeds worthy of the ancient Romans, immolated themselves upon the altar of Freedom. It was with regret I stood by the pile of stone where "memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise," to tell the stranger their glorious record of how they lived, dared and died. Certainly, the day is not far distant when Fayette county will erect a handsome monument to the memory of her brave sons.

General Wall did not halt long in San Antonio, but set out the next day after the battle, and soon put the Rio Grande between him and the infuriated Texans. The Mexican loss in the battle was 120 men killed and wounded. Caldwell entered San Antonio next day with his men. There was a Mexican woman in San Antonio at that time, who had once lived on the Guadalupe, near Seguin, and was acquainted with nearly all the settlers. When General Wall paraded his men on the plaza, just before starting to attack Caldwell on the Salado, she walked out where he was inspecting his troops, and asked him where he was going with all this fine array of soldiers: "Going out," said he, "to kill those Texans on the Salado." "You had better be very careful," said the woman, "I know those men from the Guadalupe; they are very brave men, and shoot well." When Wall came back, she again accosted him with, "Well, General, did you kill all of those Texans?" "Well, yes," said he, "that is, I killed all those out on the prairie, but those on the creek howled like wolves, and fought like devils. I did not kill quite all of them." This Mexican woman was a friend of the Texans, and was glad to see them when they came into town, going about among them, and calling a great many of them by name. When she saw the Baptist preacher, Z. N. Morrell, she said: "Oh, Mr. Morrell; I stood here on the sidewalk and looked at the prisoners as they marched them up the street, and your son was with them; he had his coat off, and was all bloody." What sad news was this to an affectionate father, his son, a mere boy, wounded and being carried a prisoner to Mexico, away from home, and loved ones, to languish as a captive in a foreign land, in dark and dreary dungeons, and, perchance, in the end, to be led out and shot as others had been before him.

Among those who stood by the gallant Caldwell at the Salado, were the following: Captain Jack Hays, Daniel B.

Frior, James H. Callahan, James Bird, Ewing Cammeron, Lieutenant Henry McCulloch, Sergeant C. B. Acklin, C. C. Colley, John Henry Brown, Jesse Zumawlt, Clem C. Hines, Eli Hankins, Joe Powers, Solomon Simmons, Rev. Karl, Cattle Perry, Stokes, judge Hemphill, Henry Bridger, Isaac Zumawlt, John H. Livergood, George Walton, Wilcox, John W. Smith, Ezekiel Smith, Solomon Brill, Archer Gibson, Creed Taylor, Josiah Taylor, Pipkin Taylor, Rufus Taylor, James Taylor, Green McCoy, James Clark, Miles Dikes, Calvin Turner, Hardin Turner, William Turner, French Smith, Z. N. Morrell, A. J. Sowell, William King, John King, Milford Day, and many other gallant men whose names I could not learn. After the battle, Lieutenant McCulloch was left in charge of the wounded, some ten or twelve in number, and as he had no wagons, was sorely perplexed as to the means for transporting the wounded men from the battleground, and while trying to devise some plan, Solomon Brill came along with a cart and team which he had captured, and which contained several pairs of blankets, and in this rude structure the lieutenant succeeded in carrying off the wounded men.

The prisoners taken at Dawson's massacre were carried to Mexico and confined in the dungeon of Perote, and it was two years before the Rev. Morrell saw his son again.

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SONS OF DEWITT COLONY TEXAS

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